PATTERNS
OF
POWER

Six Men and Five Hundred Bishops

Michael VIII, the Union of Lyon, and the Warrant That Was Revoked

1261 — 1274 — 1282

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with Claude (Anthropic)

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Held as tested, not revealed.
A case study in the Patterns of Power series.

Primary sources quoted exactly; modern scholarship paraphrased and credited.
Contested figures given as ranges. Nothing reconstructed from memory.

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PREFACE AND OUTLINE

Front matter · how this study was made, the disciplines it holds itself to, and a map of its fourteen parts

The collaboration

This is a case study in the Patterns of Power series, applying the series' framework to the position of Michael VIII Palaiologos — from the recovery of Constantinople in 1261 and the blinding of the child emperor John IV that December, through the union of the churches proclaimed at Lyon on 6 July 1274, to the Sicilian Vespers, the emperor's death in December 1282, and the union's repudiation within weeks of it.

The study was built one module at a time. The author brought the framework and the governing question; Claude, Anthropic's model, did the research and produced the drafts. Where the research contradicted the framework's expectation, the research was followed.

What this case isolates

This is the eighth study in a sequence and it supplies the counterpart to one already completed.

The sequence contains two rulers in the same structural position two centuries apart. **Charles VII of France** in 1429 was disinherited by a treaty his own father had sealed, uncrowned, under a cloud over his birth, with the great theological faculty of his kingdom in his enemy's obedience. **Michael VIII Palaiologos** in 1274 was a usurper who had blinded the legitimate emperor on the boy's eleventh birthday, had been excommunicated for it by his own patriarch, had deposed two patriarchs to obtain absolution from a third, and faced an invasion he could not defeat.

Both needed an authorisation they could not manufacture. Both went outside their own order for it. **One held for five centuries and the other for seven years**, and the comparison isolates the property that decided it.

Joan of Arc had nothing — no property, office, faction, lineage or prospect of rule — and could therefore gain nothing by issuing or by withholding. The anointing at Reims could not be cancelled by anybody, and was not.

The pope in 1274 had an army in the person of a vassal king, the papal states, a fiscal machine, a crusading policy, and **a direct interest in the very question Michael brought him — because Charles of Anjou, who was assembling a fleet to take Constantinople, held Sicily as a papal fief.** Michael went for a warrant to the feudal overlord of the man coming to kill him. Gregory X granted it and honoured it; and in February 1281 a French pope, Charles's creature, was elected, and in November he excommunicated Michael and blessed the enterprise — **without Michael having broken a single term.**

The durability of an authorisation is a function of the issuer's inability to benefit from revoking it, and nothing else in the transaction compensates for a defect in that property. Michael negotiated better than Charles VII in every respect except the one that mattered.

The case also supplies the mechanism by which the union failed at home, and it is a formation instrument no other case in this collection possesses. **Since 843 the Orthodox church had read, in every church, on the first Sunday of Great Lent, the Synodikon of Orthodoxy** — a text composed at the restoration of the icons, acclaiming the defenders of the faith and then anathematising heresies and heretics **by name**, and continuously added to over the centuries. It was recited on the feast commemorating the defeat of a century of iconoclast emperors by monks and populace.

A negative catechism is a barrier that a positive one is not. A population taught what to believe can be taught more; a population taught annually what is condemned has been handed a test it can run itself. And the union's refusal cost nothing to perform: where the required act is participation, staying home is a free and undefeatable veto.

The problem of the sources

The evidential position has a specific and consequential shape.

Almost the entire Greek record of the union was written after 1282, by opponents, under the regime that had repudiated it. The principal narrative source is George Pachymeres — a cleric of the Great Church, an opponent of the union, writing under Andronikos II, the emperor who deposed his father's patriarch and refused his father a funeral. He is serious and well informed and he is not neutral, and no line of his about the union was composed in a world where saying it was dangerous.

The Latin record is the mirror: conciliar acts and papal registers, kept by a curia recording a submission it had wanted for two centuries.

So the two archives are a record of a triumph and a record of a betrayal, of the same six men on the same afternoon. Neither contains the party that actually decided the outcome, which was the Byzantine population — appearing in both only as an obstacle to be overcome or a body to be delivered.

Where the argument rests on hostile testimony the study says so, particularly for the severity of the persecution of anti-unionists, for which no figures are given. **No figures are given anywhere in this study** for revenue, army sizes, populations or territorial extents, because the surviving material does not support them. Michael VIII's own claim of credit for the Sicilian Vespers is reported as broadly accepted with its qualifications, and no text of his autobiographical account is quoted, none having been verified against an original.

And a statement of scope: this study takes no position on the theological questions at issue between the two churches, or on whether the union of 1274 was doctrinally acceptable. Its analysis is structural.

The disciplines

Five rules govern every module. **Quotation**: public-domain primary sources exactly, modern scholarship paraphrased and credited, disputed reports flagged as disputed — including the story that Theophanes of Nicaea kept silent while the filioque was sung. **No fabrication. Gravity without partisanship**: Michael VIII is neither the saviour of the empire nor its betrayer here, and both accounts exist. **Legibility is not pardon.** And **held as tested, not revealed**.

What this case added to the framework

The central contribution is the ninth entry in the catalogue of failure modes: **revocation** — an authorisation withdrawn by its issuer without any fault in the buyer, because the issuer had interests and the interests changed. It confirms, as a demonstration rather than a forecast, the prediction offered two studies earlier: that **a source of title which acquires the means of enforcement converts itself into a claimant.** In 1054 the papacy had no army and went east to ask for one; by 1274 it had one, and its authorisations had become the policies of the party that owned it.

Beneath that, findings the case forced. That **a ruler who spends domestic legitimacy to buy an external authorisation makes an irreversible payment for a revocable asset** — what he gives cannot be un-given and what he receives terminates at

the issuer's next succession. That **a source of title with two competing applicants has become an arbitrator, and an arbitrator is a party** — Charles of Anjou and Michael VIII went to the same desk for warrants to the same city. That **a submission by representatives who represent nobody is a receipt rather than a warrant**: six men at Lyon carrying a letter written in the name of fifty archbishops and five hundred bishops who had not been asked.

That **a concession's political cost tracks how often it is performed in public, not how much it transfers** — Michael surrendered the constitution and kept the ceremonies, which is what negotiators do and is exactly backwards for a congregation. That **a concession payable in liturgy cannot be concealed, only postponed**, because a rite has an audience by definition. That **a formation built specifically by defeating the apex cannot be approached by the apex**, since the instrument of the formation is a commemoration of the apex's defeat. That **an institution of voluntary poverty is coercion-proof in both directions**, its members having renounced the goods that could buy or threaten them.

That **every purchased authorisation is a standing power over the purchaser that he created himself**, because the issuer's independence is both what made him worth going to and what makes him uncontrollable afterwards. That **where a state's threats differ in tempo its allocation follows tempo rather than magnitude** — Michael defunded the Anatolian frontier to buy time against a fleet, and the empire he saved from the Latins was taken by the Turks in the direction he stopped watching. That **an exemption-based settlement appears in a treasury's accounts as forgone revenue while the service it buys appears nowhere**, and is therefore liquidated under pressure. And that **a verdict on a ruler is a statement about the horizon at which the accounts are closed** — Michael VIII is a triumph at 1282, a disaster at 1300, and the man who bought a hundred and seventy years at 1453.

The arc

Landscape. *The City Taken by Accident.* An emperor who had blinded a child to get his throne and been excommunicated for it, a French king assembling a fleet to take his capital, and a pope who was that king's feudal overlord.

1 — The Floor of Force. *The Fleet That Was Being Built.* A recovered empire that could not defend itself, and a ruler who substituted diplomacy for an army because the army did not exist.

2 — The Settlement. *Baldwin's Claim, Sold at Viterbo.* Two rulers who went to the same desk for warrants to the same city, and what each was actually buying.

3 — The Robe. *Sung Three Times.* Six ambassadors carrying a letter written in the name of five hundred bishops who had not been asked.

4 — Formation. *Read Every Year in Lent.* A liturgical text that anathematises heresies by name, delivered annually, on a feast commemorating the defeat of emperors who tried to change doctrine.

5 — The Cost Column. *What He Spent at Home.* An emperor who paid for a foreign warrant in the currency of his own legitimacy, and had none left when the warrant was cancelled.

6 — Extraction. *The Hyperpyron Debased.* A state whose revenue could not fund its diplomacy, and the frontier that was cashed in to pay for it.

7 — Information and Suppression. *Written After It Failed.* A policy whose entire surviving Greek record was composed by men who had watched it collapse.

8 — Elite Coordination and the Default. *The Pope Who Was the Attacker's Overlord.* An authorisation bought from an interested party, honoured by one administration and cancelled by the next.

9 — Plurality or Foreclosure. *His Own Sister.* An opposition inside the emperor's family, his church and every congregation, and a refusal that cost nothing to perform.

10 — Change and Collapse. *The Vespers.* An emperor who defeated the greatest soldier in Europe by an insurrection he helped arrange, died three months later, and was refused a funeral.

11 — The Grim Accounting. *The Emperor Without a Funeral.* A policy that succeeded in everything it was designed to do and cost more than it saved.

12 — Convergence and Divergence. *The Maid and the Pope.* Two rulers with defective titles who went outside their own orders for a warrant, and the single property that decided which one worked.

LANDSCAPE

THE CITY TAKEN BY ACCIDENT

Landscape · the position on the eve — an emperor who had blinded a child to get his throne and been excommunicated for it, a French king assembling a fleet to take his capital, and a pope who was that king's feudal overlord

The position

Michael VIII Palaiologos in 1272 held a defective title over a recovered capital against an enemy he could not beat, and every element of that sentence needs establishing.

The title was defective and he had made it so himself. After the death of Theodore II Laskaris in 1258 he had instigated the coup that killed the regent George Mouzalon and taken the guardianship of the eight-year-old emperor John IV Laskaris. On 1 January 1259 he had himself proclaimed co-emperor. On 25 July 1261 his general Alexios Strategopoulos took Constantinople from the last Latin emperor — by accident, finding the garrison absent, with a small force. Michael entered on 15 August, without John, and was crowned in Hagia Sophia with his own son as co-emperor.

Then, on **25 December 1261 — the boy's eleventh birthday — he had John IV blinded**, which under Byzantine convention made him ineligible to reign, and imprisoned him in Bithynia.

The patriarch Arsenios Autoreianos excommunicated him for it.

What followed is the whole shape of his domestic position. Michael deposed Arsenios in 1265 and exiled him. He installed Germanos III, who resigned in 1266 under pressure from Arsenios's supporters. He installed his own confessor as Joseph I in 1267, and the ban was finally lifted in 1268 — **seven years after the act, by the third patriarch he had installed.** The resulting Arsenite schism divided the Byzantine church until 1310.

He was a usurper, a mutilator of a legitimate child emperor, excommunicated by his own church for seven years, and had deposed two patriarchs to obtain absolution from a third. That is the man who in 1274 asked the same church to accept union with Rome.

The enemy

The external position was worse and it was closing.

Charles of Anjou, brother of Louis IX of France, had been given the kingdom of Sicily by the papacy, had destroyed Manfred at Benevento in 1266, had beheaded the sixteen-year-old Conradin in 1268, and now held southern Italy and Sicily with the best army in the Mediterranean and a fleet to move it.

And in May 1267, at **Viterbo**, under papal auspices, he had bought the claim. Baldwin II, the dispossessed Latin emperor of Constantinople, ceded to Charles his rights over the empire in exchange for a promise of restoration; a marriage sealed it; and the treaty set out the division of what would be conquered.

Charles of Anjou held a title to Constantinople, purchased from a man who did not hold it, witnessed by a pope, and he was assembling the means to enforce it.

Michael could not beat him. The Byzantine recovery of 1261 had produced a state with a fraction of the empire's old resources, a hostile Balkans, a Turkish frontier in Anatolia that was already deteriorating, and a treasury that could not match Angevin France and Sicily.

The lever

What he had instead was a single lever, and its nature is the whole case.

Charles of Anjou held Sicily as a papal fief. The kingdom had been granted to him by the papacy; his expedition would need papal blessing to be a crusade rather than an act of aggression against fellow Christians; and a pope who forbade it could stop it, or at least delay it.

So Michael's problem reduced to a single transaction. **He needed the pope to restrain Charles, and the price of papal restraint was ecclesiastical submission.**

That is the position, and the sequence has met it before from a different direction. Charles VII of France, two centuries later, would hold a defective title and need an authorisation he could not manufacture. The parallel is exact in its structure and opposite in one particular that decides both cases, and the closing module will state it.

The pope

The man he had to deal with had been elected after the longest interregnum in papal history.

Clement IV died in November 1268 and the cardinals at Viterbo could not agree for **two years and nine months**, until the townspeople locked them in, reduced their

rations and — on the tradition — removed the roof of the building. In September 1271 they chose Tedaldo Visconti, who was not a cardinal and was not even in Europe; he was on crusade at Acre. He took the name **Gregory X**.

Gregory wanted two things: a crusade to recover the Holy Land, and the union of the churches. He was, by all accounts, sincere about both, and he was willing to restrain Charles of Anjou to get them — which he did, inducing Charles and the titular Latin emperor to moderate their ambitions while the negotiation ran.

That is the one period in this case when the instrument worked, and it lasted as long as Gregory did.

What stood in the way at home

And the obstacle was not the hierarchy, which Michael had already shown he could replace at will. It was the population, and the reason is a liturgical fact that the module on formation will develop and that has to be stated here because it governs everything.

Since 843 the Orthodox church had read, in every church, on the first Sunday of Great Lent, a text that anathematised heresies by name.

The Synodikon of Orthodoxy was composed by the patriarch Methodios in the year the veneration of icons was restored, to commemorate a victory won by monks and populace against a century of emperors. It praises the defenders of the faith and it curses the heretics, by name, and it was added to over the centuries as new errors were condemned.

A population that hears an annual liturgical recitation of who is anathema, on a feast commemorating the defeat of emperors who tried to change doctrine, is a population formed to refuse exactly what Michael VIII was about to ask of it.

Reading the eve against the framework

On the position, and it is the sequence's recurring one. A ruler with a defective title, unable to manufacture an authorisation, seeking one from a source outside his own order. Michael VIII is the eastern instance and it is unusually pure, because his title was defective in the most public way available — he had blinded the legitimate emperor, and his own patriarch had said so.

On what was distinctive, and it is the finding that organises the case. The authoriser Michael went to **was not disinterested.**

Every successful instance in this sequence has turned on an issuer who could gain nothing either way: a caliph with no army and a cuttable stipend; a peasant girl with no

property, office or prospect; a lineage whose eminence predated the patron. The Investiture study established the corresponding warning — **that a source of title which acquires the means of enforcement converts itself into a claimant and forfeits the immunity that made it worth going to.**

By 1274 the papacy had acquired exactly that. It had a floor: the Angevin army, which it had itself installed in Sicily and held as a fief. It had a policy: the crusade. It had a fiscal machine. And it had a stake in the outcome of the very question Michael was bringing to it, since the man threatening Constantinople was its own vassal.

Michael VIII went for a warrant to the feudal overlord of the man who was coming to kill him. He obtained it, and it worked for seven years, and then a pope was elected who was that vassal's creature and it was revoked without Michael having broken a single term.

An authorisation purchased from an interested issuer is not an authorisation. It is a policy, and policies change with administrations — which is the general form of what this case demonstrates and what the modules below will trace.

A note on sources.

The coup of 1258 against George Mouzalon, Michael's elevation as co-emperor on 1 January 1259, Alexios Strategopoulos's capture of Constantinople on 25 July 1261 with a small force in the garrison's absence, Michael's entry on 15 August and coronation in Hagia Sophia, the blinding of John IV Laskaris on 25 December 1261 on the boy's eleventh birthday, his imprisonment in Bithynia, Arsenios's excommunication of Michael, the deposition and exile of Arsenios in 1265, Germanos III's resignation in 1266, the appointment of Joseph I in 1267 and the lifting of the ban in 1268, and the Arsenite schism running to about 1310, are standard.

Charles of Anjou's acquisition of Sicily as a papal fief, Benevento (1266), the execution of Conradin (1268), and the Treaty of Viterbo of May 1267 by which Baldwin II ceded his claim to the Latin empire, are standard.

The Viterbo conclave of 1268–71, its length, the townspeople's measures including the removal of the roof, and the election of Tedaldo Visconti as Gregory X while he was at Acre, are standard; the roof detail is transmitted in the tradition and is reported as such. Gregory X's inducement of Charles and the titular Latin emperor to moderate their ambitions is reported in the standard accounts of the negotiation.

The Synodikon of Orthodoxy — composed by the patriarch Methodios in 843, read on the first Sunday of Great Lent, containing praises followed by anathemas naming heresies and heretics, and expanded by later additions particularly from the mid-eleventh century and through the Komnenian era — is standard and is treated at

length in Module 4.

The framing of Michael's position as parallel to that of Charles VII of France draws on the study of that case in this sequence; the identification of issuer interest as the discriminating variable is this study's and is developed in Module 8.

MODULE 1

THE FLEET THAT WAS BEING BUILT

Module 1 · the floor of force — a recovered empire that could not defend itself, an enemy who could, and a ruler who substituted diplomacy for an army because the army did not exist

What Michael actually held

Strip the rhetoric of restoration and the military position in 1274 was poor.

The recovered empire consisted of Constantinople and its hinterland, Thrace, much of Macedonia, the western coast of Asia Minor, and scattered holdings in the Aegean. It did not include most of Greece, which was held by Latin principalities; it did not include Epirus or Thessaly, ruled by hostile Greek dynasts; it did not include Trebizond; and it did not include the Anatolian interior.

Against it stood, simultaneously: Charles of Anjou in the west with the resources of southern Italy, Sicily and Provence; the Latin princes of Achaea; the Despotate of Epirus and Thessaly; Bulgaria and Serbia in the north; Venice, whose commercial position the recovery had damaged; and the Turkish emirates forming along the Anatolian frontier.

Michael had one first-class military achievement to his name — Pelagonia in 1259, where he had destroyed a coalition of Achaea and Epirus before the recovery of the capital — and it had been won by his brother. The recovery of Constantinople itself had been an accident of an absent garrison.

What he built and what he did not

He was not passive about the floor. He rebuilt the walls of Constantinople, repopulated a city that fifty-seven years of Latin rule had left ruined and half-empty, and — this is the item that mattered most — **built a fleet**, which the Byzantine state had effectively lacked since the twelfth century, in the correct understanding that an Angevin invasion would have to come by sea.

He also bought allies with the persistence of a man who knows he cannot fight. **Genoa**, against Venice, by the Treaty of Nymphaion of 1261, at the cost of commercial

concessions that would eventually hollow out Byzantine trade. **The Mongol Ilkhans**, by marriage. **Bulgaria and Hungary**, by marriage. And — the masterstroke, and the subject of the module on collapse — **Peter III of Aragon**, who had a claim on Sicily through his wife and a grievance against Charles of Anjou.

And he neglected Anatolia. The frontier troops of the eastern marches, whose tax privileges and lands had sustained a militarised border society, were reduced; resources went west; and within a generation the frontier was gone. That is the module on extraction's business and it is the largest single entry in the case's accounting.

Why the union was a military instrument

Which establishes the point this module exists to make.

The union of 1274 was not a religious policy that had military consequences. It was a military policy conducted by ecclesiastical means, and it was undertaken because the alternative — defeating Charles of Anjou in the field — was not available.

Michael understood the Angevin threat precisely. He knew Charles held Sicily as a papal fief. He knew an expedition against Constantinople would need to be a crusade or an act of war between Christian princes, and that the difference lay in a papal decision. And he knew that the one thing a pope wanted badly enough to spend that decision on was the submission of the Greek church.

So he priced the submission against the invasion and paid it. That is not cynicism and it is not apostasy; it is a sovereign making the trade his position made available, and the modules that follow examine what the trade actually bought and what it actually cost.

What it bought, militarily

The answer is: seven years, and they were real years.

Gregory X restrained Charles from 1272 to 1276, and the restraint was effective — the expedition did not sail. Gregory's successors continued the restraint while the union held. Charles fumed, and took what he could in Albania and Achaea, and did not launch the main enterprise.

In 1274 an army that could have taken Constantinople was stopped by a document signed in France by six Greeks. That is a very large return on an ecclesiastical concession and it should be entered as one.

It was also a rental rather than a purchase, and the module on the default will explain why.

Reading the floor against the framework

The finding, and it is the inverse of the sequence's usual one. This series has repeatedly found doctrine functioning to make force cheap. Here doctrine functioned as a **substitute for force that did not exist.**

Where a ruler cannot field an army adequate to his threat, and where the threat's legality depends on a third party's decision, the ruler will attack the decision rather than the army — and the currency he pays in will be whatever that third party cannot obtain by other means.

The pope could obtain money, soldiers and territory from many sources. He could obtain the submission of the Greek church from exactly one, and Michael VIII was it. **A ruler with nothing else to sell will find that the one thing he uniquely possesses is precisely the thing his own people would least willingly part with**, which is the tragedy of this case and is not a coincidence — a monopoly good is monopoly precisely because nobody else has it, and a nation's confessional identity is the purest instance.

And the second finding, on rented restraint. What Michael bought was not a permanent settlement but the forbearance of a particular pope, and forbearance is an act rather than a status.

An authorisation that consists in another party declining to act must be renewed with every occupant of the office, and it therefore depends entirely on the succession of that office — which Michael did not control and could not influence, and which produced, in 1281, a Frenchman.

A note on sources.

The territorial extent of the restored empire, the hostile powers surrounding it, and the condition of Constantinople after 1261 are standard. The battle of Pelagonia in 1259, commanded by Michael's brother John Palaiologos, is standard.

Michael's rebuilding of the walls and repopulation of Constantinople, and his construction of a fleet, are standard. The Treaty of Nymphaion with Genoa in 1261 and its commercial concessions are standard. The marriage alliances with the Ilkhanate, Bulgaria and Hungary are standard, as is the alliance with Peter III of Aragon, which is treated in Module 10.

The reduction of the Anatolian frontier forces and their privileges is standard and is treated in Module 6; the causal connection to the frontier's collapse is the received scholarly account and is reported as such.

Gregory X's restraint of Charles of Anjou between the opening of negotiations and his death in January 1276, and the non-departure of the Angevin expedition during the period of the union, are standard.

The proposition that a ruler who cannot match a threat militarily will attack the decision that legalises it, and that his payment will be in whatever the deciding party cannot obtain elsewhere, is this study's.

MODULE 2

BALDWIN'S CLAIM, SOLD AT VITERBO

Module 2 · the settlement — two rulers who went to the same desk for warrants to the same city, and what each was actually buying

The other transaction

The most illuminating fact about the union of 1274 is that Michael VIII was the second man to buy a papal warrant to Constantinople, and the first had bought his seven years earlier.

In May 1267 at Viterbo, in the pope's own residence, Baldwin II — the Latin emperor whom Michael had displaced in 1261 — ceded his rights over the empire of Constantinople to Charles of Anjou. The instrument provided for Charles to restore Baldwin, sealed the arrangement with a marriage between Baldwin's son Philip and Charles's daughter Beatrice, and set out the partition of the territories to be conquered.

Read as a transaction it is the sequence's standard form running in the ordinary direction. **A man with an army and no title bought a title from a man with a title and no army, and the transfer was performed under the auspices of the one authority whose recognition would make it citable.**

And it created the precise situation this module exists to describe.

Two rulers went to the same desk for warrants concerning the same city. Charles asked the papacy to recognise a claim to take Constantinople. Michael asked the papacy to recognise him as its lawful Christian sovereign. **One issuer, two applicants, incompatible requests.**

What each was buying

Charles was buying legality for an aggression. An attack on Constantinople was, absent papal cover, an act of war by a Catholic king against a Christian city — which is exactly what the Fourth Crusade had been, and the memory of 1204 was live in the West as well as the East. With papal blessing it becomes a crusade against schismatics: the same fleet, the same men, the same city, and an entirely different legal character.

That is the conversion this collection has examined in every case. **The document does not supply the force; it determines whether the force is an execution or a murder.**

Michael was buying the withdrawal of that conversion. He was not asking the pope to defend him; no papal army would have come. He was asking the pope to decline to legalise the attack — to make Charles's expedition, if it sailed, a war of one Christian prince against another, with the consequences that carried for recruitment, for financing, and for what a French king could ask his nobility to do.

Neither was buying force. Both were buying the classification of force, and they were buying it from the same seller.

What Michael had to concede

The terms were settled before Lyon and the delegation went to perform them. The Greeks conceded:

Papal primacy — the Roman church's supreme and full primacy over the universal church, held from Christ through Peter.

The right of appeal — that cases might be brought to the Roman see.

Commemoration — that the pope's name would be restored to the diptychs and read in the liturgy.

And the filioque — the western doctrine of the Spirit's procession, which the delegation would abjure twenty-six propositions to affirm.

What they retained was the **rite**: the Greeks were to keep their own liturgy, their own customs, their own married clergy.

That distribution is the module's second finding and it repays attention. Michael conceded everything constitutional and kept everything visible.

He gave away the answer to who authorises whom — the question this entire sequence has been tracing — and kept the ceremonies. From a negotiator's standpoint that is the right trade, because the constitutional concessions cost nothing in practice: no appeal from a Greek diocese was ever going to reach Rome, and the pope's name in the diptychs is three seconds of a liturgy.

From the population's standpoint it was the reverse. The pope's name in the diptychs is not a technicality; it is the audible, weekly, public statement that the man anathematised in the Synodikon every Lent is now commemorated in the anaphora. And the filioque is a change to the creed, which every Christian recites.

A negotiator prices concessions by their administrative consequences and a congregation prices them by their audibility, and the two rankings are close to

inverse — which is why the union looked cheap in Lyon and impossible in Constantinople.

What the hierarchy got

The domestic settlement is short and brutal.

Patriarch Joseph I refused and undertook, before the delegation left, that he would resign if the union were concluded. It was, and he was removed in January 1275.

John XI Bekkos — the *chartophylax*, who had previously been an opponent of union and had been imprisoned for it, and who changed his mind after reading the Latin fathers in prison — was made patriarch in May 1275 and became the union's principal theological defender.

The unionist clergy received appointments, and the anti-unionists were removed from them.

And the emperor's family and the monasteries received nothing and gave nothing, which is the subject of Module 9.

Reading the settlement against the framework

The first finding, and it is the sequence's clearest instance of a mechanism it has been circling. When two parties bring incompatible requests to one authoriser, the authoriser is no longer an authoriser.

A source of title with two applicants for the same thing has become an arbitrator, and an arbitrator is a party — because the choice is his, the choice has consequences he can foresee, and both applicants know that his choice is a policy rather than a determination.

Michael understood this perfectly and behaved accordingly: he did not argue that he was right, he made an offer. So did Charles. And Gregory X chose Michael's offer because he preferred union and a crusade to a war in the Aegean, and Martin IV chose Charles's because he was Charles's man.

Where a warrant is granted by choice between competing supplicants rather than determined by a rule, it is not a warrant.

The second finding, on how concessions are priced. Michael's negotiators surrendered the constitution and kept the ceremonies, which is what negotiators do, because the constitution had no immediate administrative bite and the ceremonies were daily.

They had it exactly backwards for the audience whose acceptance the whole thing required. The population could not observe papal primacy and could observe a

name in the diptychs and a clause in the creed, and it was the observable things that broke it.

A concession's political cost is a function of how often it is performed in public, not of how much it transfers — and any settlement negotiated by officials over a religious population should be expected to get this wrong in the same direction.

A note on sources.

The Treaty of Viterbo of May 1267, the cession of Baldwin II's rights to Charles of Anjou, the marriage of Philip of Courtenay and Beatrice of Anjou, and the provisions for partition, are standard.

The terms of the union — papal primacy, the right of appeal, the commemoration of the pope in the diptychs, and the filioque, with the retention of the Greek rite — follow the standard accounts and the profession made at Lyon; the twenty-six propositions abjured by the delegation are as reported in the conciliar record.

Joseph I's undertaking to resign, his removal in January 1275, and the elevation of John XI Bekkos in May 1275 together with his earlier opposition, imprisonment and change of view, are standard.

The proposition that a source of title with two competing applicants becomes an arbitrator and therefore a party, and the proposition that a concession's political cost tracks its frequency of public performance rather than its transfer of authority, are this study's.

MODULE 3

SUNG THREE TIMES

Module 3 · the robe — six ambassadors carrying a letter written in the name of five hundred bishops who had not been asked, and a metropolitan who is said to have kept his mouth shut

The scene

The Second Council of Lyon opened on 7 May 1274 in the church of St John. Some five hundred bishops attended, with sixty abbots and more than a thousand prelates and proctors. Of thirteen crowned heads of western Europe invited, one came.

The Byzantine legation was delayed by shipwreck and reached Lyon on **24 June**. It consisted of six men: **Germanos III**, a former patriarch of Constantinople; **Theophanes**, metropolitan of Nicaea; **George Akropolites**, the Grand Logothete, who was the emperor's own representative; and three others including the chief interpreter.

They carried a letter from Michael VIII. **It was written in the name of fifty archbishops and five hundred bishops or synods.**

On **29 June**, the feast of Peter and Paul, Gregory X celebrated mass. The epistle, gospel and creed were read or sung in Latin and in Greek, and the article *qui a patre filioque procedit* — who proceeds from the Father **and the Son** — was **sung three times by the Greeks.**

On **6 July**, after a sermon and the public reading of the emperor's letter, Akropolites and the other ambassadors promised fidelity to the Roman church, abjured twenty-six propositions it denied, and undertook the emperor's protection for the Christians of the Holy Land.

The union of the churches was proclaimed.

Who was in the room

Now count.

Six Greeks. One of them a former patriarch, deposed years earlier; one a metropolitan; one a layman and imperial official; three subordinates.

The reigning patriarch of Constantinople was not there. Joseph I had refused, and had undertaken to resign if the union were made.

No Byzantine synod had authorised it. There had been discussions, pressure, and a good deal of coercion, but there was no conciliar act of the Greek church empowering these men to submit it.

The letter's fifty archbishops and five hundred bishops had not signed anything, and a substantial number of them had never been consulted.

So what was performed at Lyon on 6 July 1274 was this: **an emperor's ambassadors, carrying a document written in the names of people who had not authorised it, submitted a church that had not agreed, to a pope who required the submission before he would restrain the man coming to destroy that church's city.**

Why that matters structurally

This sequence has established, from five directions, that an authorisation is worth having because the beneficiary could not have produced it. Turn the proposition round and ask what the *pope* was receiving.

He was receiving a submission, and a submission is worth what the submitting party's capacity to deliver is worth.

Gregory X was not being deceived; the terms and the Greek domestic situation were well understood on both sides, and his envoys had been in Constantinople in 1273. He accepted a submission by imperial ambassadors because that was what was on offer and because he had reason to think an emperor who could depose two patriarchs could deliver a church.

He was wrong, and the reason he was wrong is the sequence's most persistent finding. An emperor could depose patriarchs. He could not deliver a population, because a population's belief was not his to transfer.

A submission by representatives who represent nobody is a receipt rather than a warrant — it records that a payment was made and it does not establish that the goods exist.

The man who kept his mouth shut

And there is a story, and it is worth having with its caution attached.

It is reported that when the creed was sung and the Greeks came to the filioque, **Theophanes of Nicaea did not say it.** The tale was accepted by some historians and is doubted by others; Donald Nicol discusses it in his study of the Byzantine reaction to

the council. This study reports it as transmitted and does not vouch for it.

Its interest does not depend on its truth. **It is the story the Byzantine tradition wanted to tell about its own delegation**, and what that tradition wanted was a man in the room who had not said the words — some fragment of the church that had not, in the end, consented.

Which is a statement about what everybody afterwards understood the union to have been: not a settlement between two churches, but **a performance by an embassy**, and one about which even its own side wished to record an abstention.

What the robe was for, on each side

For Gregory X the union was the completion of a two-hundred-year project and the precondition of a crusade. He had been at Acre when he was elected; the recovery of the Holy Land was the purpose of his pontificate, and a Christendom at war with itself in the Aegean could not attempt it. The union let him tell Charles of Anjou that the Greeks were no longer schismatics and that the expedition had no religious warrant.

For Michael VIII it was a receipt to be produced when Charles applied for his crusade. It did not need to be believed in Constantinople; it needed to be filed in Rome.

And there is the flaw, stated as the parties would not have stated it. A document that works by being filed rather than believed is a document whose force depends entirely on the filing clerk — and the office of the filing clerk changes hands.

Reading the robe against the framework

The finding. The union of Lyon satisfies every formal condition of a legitimating act and fails the substantive one, and the gap between those is the module's contribution.

A legitimating instrument requires two things: an issuer who could have refused, and a recipient who can deliver what he has promised. This sequence has concentrated on the first and this case supplies the second.

Michael VIII could not deliver. He had no mechanism for transferring his church's allegiance, because the thing being transferred was not held by any office he controlled. He could produce patriarchs, appointments, signatures and letters in the name of five hundred bishops, and none of those is the article.

Where a ruler undertakes to deliver a population's assent, ask what instrument he holds by which assent is given — and if the answer is that he appoints the men who would announce it, he holds nothing. Announcements are not assent.

And the second finding, on receipts. The document produced at Lyon functioned, for seven years, exactly as intended: it sat in Rome and was produced when Charles applied for a crusading warrant, and it worked.

An instrument that works by being on file rather than by being believed is an administrative asset, not a legitimation — and it lasts precisely as long as the administration that files it. When the office changed in 1281 the file was reinterpreted, and nothing in Constantinople had changed to prevent it.

A note on sources.

The opening of the council on 7 May 1274 and its attendance, the arrival of the Byzantine legation on 24 June after delay by shipwreck, its composition — Germanos III, formerly patriarch; Theophanes, metropolitan of Nicaea; the Grand Logothete George Akropolites; Nicholas Panaretos; the chief interpreter Berrhoiotes; and George Tzimiskes — the letter written in the name of fifty archbishops and five hundred bishops or synods, the mass of 29 June at which the creed was sung in Latin and Greek with *qui a patre filioque procedit* sung three times by the Greeks, and the proclamation of union on 6 July with the abjuration of twenty-six propositions and the undertaking regarding the Holy Land, follow the standard accounts including the *Catholic Encyclopedia* article on the council and Donald Nicol's study of the Byzantine reaction.

The absence of the reigning patriarch and of any authorising Byzantine synodal act is standard. Gregory X's embassy to Constantinople in 1273 is standard.

The report that Theophanes of Nicaea did not pronounce the filioque is transmitted in the tradition, was accepted by some earlier scholars and is treated sceptically by others including Nicol; it is reported here as transmitted and is not relied on for any argument except the one explicitly made about what the tradition wished to record.

The propositions that a submission by unauthorised representatives is a receipt rather than a warrant, and that an instrument working by being on file lasts only as long as the administration that files it, are this study's.

MODULE 4

READ EVERY YEAR IN LENT

Module 4 · formation — a liturgical text that anathematises heresies by name, delivered annually to every congregation, on a feast commemorating the defeat of emperors who tried to change doctrine

What 843 actually built

The iconoclast controversy is normally treated as a doctrinal episode about images. Its more important product was an **instrument**, and the instrument is why the union of 1274 was impossible.

From 726 to 843, with an interval, a succession of Byzantine emperors attempted to remove images from Christian worship. They had the state, the army, the appointments, and for long periods the episcopate. They were defeated — by monks, by popular devotion, and finally by an empress and a patriarch who reversed the policy.

On **11 March 843**, the first Sunday of Lent, a synod at Constantinople restored the icons, and the participants processed from the Church of Blachernae to Hagia Sophia. The synod decreed a perpetual annual feast on the first Sunday of Great Lent: **the Sunday of Orthodoxy, the Triumph of Orthodoxy.**

And the patriarch Methodios composed, for that feast, a text to be read at it.

The Synodikon

The **Synodikon of Orthodoxy** has two halves and both matter.

The first is **acclamation**: eternal memory to the defenders of the faith, to the emperors and patriarchs and confessors who upheld it.

The second is **anathema**: the naming of heresies and of heretics, one after another, with the congregation's response.

It was read annually, in every church, on the first Sunday of Lent, from 843 onward. And — this is the property that makes it an instrument rather than a monument — **it was added to.** New names were inserted and old ones removed as new errors were condemned; the additions run from the mid-eleventh century and thickly through the Komnenian period, and continued afterwards.

That is a live, updated, annually delivered catechism of what is forbidden, addressed to the entire population, in a liturgy nobody could opt out of.

What it did to the population

Set that beside what this collection has established about formation and the consequence is exact.

Every previous study in this sequence has found that formation is cheap, decentralised, and owned by nobody — the parish, the household, the calendar, the sermon. The state does not build it and cannot switch it off, which is why a conqueror can borrow it and why a ruler cannot renegotiate it.

The Synodikon is that machinery with a specific and unusual payload. An ordinary Christian formation teaches what to believe. This one, annually and by name, teaches **what has been condemned and who condemned it** — and it does so on a feast whose entire content is the memory that emperors once tried to change doctrine and were beaten by the people who are listening.

A population catechised for four centuries in an annual recitation of anathemas, on the anniversary of a lay and monastic victory over imperial doctrinal policy, has been formed to do exactly one thing: refuse.

The other component: 1204

And the formation had acquired a second component within living memory of 1274.

The Fourth Crusade had taken Constantinople in April 1204 and sacked it for three days; a Latin emperor had ruled for fifty-seven years; a Latin patriarch had sat in Hagia Sophia; and the relics of the city were dispersed across western Europe, where they remained.

Michael VIII recovered the city in 1261. **The generation he asked to accept union in 1274 contained men who had been born under Latin rule and men who remembered its beginning.**

So the formation of a Byzantine Christian in 1274 contained, as installed components: an annual liturgical anathema-list; a feast celebrating the defeat of doctrinal innovation by monks and populace; and a personal or parental memory of Latins in the sanctuary.

Every one of those is a specific inoculation against the specific thing the emperor was asking for.

What the emperor could and could not reach

Michael VIII was not powerless with respect to the church. He had demonstrated exactly what he could do.

He could depose a patriarch — he had done it twice before 1274 and did it again in 1275. **He could appoint one** — Germanos III, Joseph I, and then Bekkos. **He could fill the sees** with unionists and empty them of opponents. **He could imprison, exile, blind and mutilate**, and did.

He could not stop the Synodikon being read, because to suppress the Synodikon would have been to attack the Triumph of Orthodoxy itself, which is to say the foundation of the very church he was claiming to unite. And he could not reach the thing the Synodikon had built, because it was not in any office.

A ruler can replace an interpretive class's officers and cannot replace what that class has already put into the population — and where the formation includes an annual, liturgical, named list of what is forbidden, the population is not merely disinclined to accept an innovation but equipped with a vocabulary for refusing it.

Reading formation against the framework

The first finding, and it identifies a formation instrument the collection has not previously named.

Ordinary religious formation transmits a positive content: what to believe, what to do, who the saints are. **The Synodikon transmits a negative one — an enumerated, updated, publicly recited list of condemned positions and condemned persons.** And a negative catechism is a far more effective barrier to doctrinal change than a positive one, for a reason worth stating.

A positive formation can accommodate an addition; a negative formation is a list, and an addition either is on it or contradicts it. A population taught what to believe can be taught something further. A population taught annually what is anathema, by name, has been given a test it can apply itself — and when the emperor's new doctrine is examined against the list, it fails, and every layman in the church can see it fail.

Where a tradition maintains an annually recited enumeration of its condemnations, its doctrine is effectively frozen at the level of the population, whatever its hierarchy signs.

The second finding, on what a victory institutionalises. The Synodikon exists because the iconoclast emperors lost. It is the memorial of that defeat, converted into

an annual liturgical act.

A community that has once defeated its ruler on a question of doctrine, and that commemorates the victory liturgically, has installed a precedent in the formation of everyone born afterwards — not as a fact they learn but as a rite they perform. The Byzantine population of 1274 did not need to be told that emperors could be resisted on doctrine. It had been rehearsing the memory of it, every spring, for four hundred and thirty-one years.

And the third, which follows from both. This sequence has repeatedly found that a formation the apex did not build is one the apex cannot renegotiate. This case supplies the strongest version: **a formation that was built specifically by defeating the apex is one the apex cannot even approach**, because the instrument of the formation is itself a commemoration of the apex's defeat, and suppressing it would concede the whole question.

A note on sources.

The iconoclast controversy from 726, the second period from 815 to 842, the synod at Constantinople in 843 under the empress Theodora, her son Michael III and the patriarch Methodios, the procession from the Church of Blachernae to Hagia Sophia on 11 March 843, and the decree of a perpetual feast on the first Sunday of Great Lent, are standard.

The Synodikon of Orthodoxy — composed by Methodios in 843, read annually on that feast, comprising acclamations of the defenders of the faith followed by anathemas naming heresies and heretics, and receiving successive additions from the mid-eleventh century and through the Komnenian era with old names removed and new ones inserted — is standard. That in recent practice only the acclamations are commonly read is likewise reported.

The sack of 1204, the Latin empire to 1261 and the Latin patriarchate in Hagia Sophia are treated in the East–West Schism study in this sequence, with their sources.

Michael VIII's depositions and appointments of patriarchs are treated in the Landscape and Module 2; the persecution of opponents is treated in Module 5.

The characterisation of the Synodikon as a negative catechism, the proposition that a negative formation resists doctrinal addition more effectively than a positive one, and the argument that a formation built by defeating the apex cannot be approached by the apex, are this study's.

MODULE 5

WHAT HE SPENT AT HOME

Module 5 · the cost column — an emperor who paid for a foreign warrant in the currency of his own legitimacy, and had none left when the warrant was cancelled

The bill in Constantinople

The union cost Michael VIII nothing abroad and everything at home, and the domestic column can be itemised.

The patriarch. Joseph I removed in January 1275, having undertaken beforehand to go if the union were made. That is the third patriarch Michael had disposed of.

The church's officers. Bekkos installed; unionists appointed; opponents removed from sees, monasteries and offices.

His own family. The opposition's centre included his sister Eulogia and, through her, her daughters, one of whom was tsaritsa of Bulgaria. The most dangerous unionist opponents in Constantinople were the emperor's closest relatives, and he proceeded against them.

The monks. Athos, Constantinople, and the monastic houses generally refused. The record of what was done to them includes imprisonment, exile, confiscation, mutilation and blinding, and the Byzantine sources — hostile, and written after the union collapsed — report it at length.

And the Arsenites, still in schism from the blinding of 1261, who now had a second grievance and a much larger constituency.

By 1281 the emperor who had recovered Constantinople was governing a church he had comprehensively broken, and had done it to obtain a piece of paper that a pope had just cancelled.

What it did not cost

The comparison with the western cases is instructive because the direct financial cost was trivial.

There was no annates flow to Rome, no papal collectors in Byzantine territory, no curial apparatus to fund. The union transferred no revenue. Michael did not pay money for the pope's forbearance and was not asked to.

He paid in a currency that does not appear in any account book and cannot be replenished, which is the module's subject.

The currency

Set out what a Byzantine emperor's domestic position rested on and the trade becomes legible.

A recovered capital. Michael had that, and it was genuinely his greatest asset — the man who took Constantinople back after fifty-seven years had a claim on the loyalty of everyone who cared about the city.

A defective title. He had blinded the legitimate emperor and been excommunicated for it.

And a church that had absolved him. The lifting of the ban in 1268, by the third patriarch he had appointed, was the repair of that defect — and it had been expensive to obtain.

In 1274 he spent the repair. By forcing the union he re-opened the wound of 1261 in a new form: the emperor who had blinded a child and deposed a patriarch to escape the consequences was now deposing another patriarch to impose a foreign doctrine. The Arsenites and the anti-unionists were largely the same people, and the sources treat them as a single opposition, because from the population's side they were one thing: **a man who breaks the church to get what he wants.**

A ruler's stock of domestic legitimacy is finite, is spent by acts rather than by time, and does not replenish — and Michael had already spent most of his in the 1260s before he began spending again in 1274.

The other cost, and it was larger

And there is an item that dwarfs everything above, and it is not ecclesiastical.

He paid for the west with the east.

The whole apparatus of Michael's foreign policy — the fleet, the subsidies, the marriages, the bribes to Italian and Balkan powers, the campaigns in Greece and Albania — was funded out of a state whose revenues had never recovered from 1204, and the money and attention came from somewhere.

They came from Anatolia. The frontier districts of the Byzantine east had been held by a militarised border society whose tax privileges and land tenures sustained it; those privileges were reduced, the resources went west, and the frontier deteriorated. **Within a generation of Michael's death the Turkish emirates had taken almost all of Byzantine Asia Minor, and the emirate that would become the Ottoman state was founded on that frontier in exactly those years.**

Michael VIII spent the eastern frontier to buy time in the west, and the thing he bought time against — a Latin conquest of Constantinople — never happened, while the thing he stopped paying attention to took the empire.

That is the largest entry in this study's cost column and it is not about the union at all. It is about what a ruler under existential pressure from one direction stops looking at.

Reading the cost column against the framework

The first finding, on the currency of legitimation purchases. This sequence has priced legitimating instruments in money repeatedly — a hundred thousand dinars, a thousand ingots of silver, fifty-nine thousand bolts of silk, ten thousand livres not paid. This case is priced in a different currency and the difference matters.

Where a ruler purchases an external authorisation with a doctrinal concession, he pays in domestic legitimacy — which is finite, is spent by acts rather than time, and cannot be replenished by success.

Michael won. He stopped Charles of Anjou, he kept Constantinople, he outmanoeuvred the greatest soldier in Europe, and the Sicilian Vespers destroyed the invasion. **None of that bought back a single unit of what he had spent**, and when he died his own son repudiated the policy within weeks and his body was refused Orthodox burial.

Domestic legitimacy is not a fund that success replenishes. It is a stock that acts deplete, and a ruler who spends it to buy an external instrument has made an irreversible trade for a revocable asset.

The second finding, on attention. The Anatolian frontier is the case's real disaster and nobody at the time treated it as the emergency.

A ruler facing an existential threat from one direction will strip the other directions to meet it, and the stripping is invisible because nothing is happening there yet. Charles of Anjou was a fleet and an army with a date on it. The Turkish frontier was a slow deterioration with no date on it at all. Michael allocated correctly by urgency and catastrophically by consequence, and the empire he saved in 1282 was lost in the direction he had stopped watching.

Where a state's threats differ in tempo, its allocation will follow tempo rather than magnitude — which is a general failure and is not a failure of intelligence, since the fast threat really is the one that will kill you first.

A note on sources.

The removal of Joseph I in January 1275, the elevation of Bekkos in May 1275, and the appointment of unionists to sees and offices are standard. The opposition of Michael's sister Eulogia and her family, and the involvement of her daughters including the tsaritsa of Bulgaria, are standard.

The persecution of anti-unionists — imprisonment, exile, confiscation, mutilation and blinding — is reported at length in the Byzantine sources, principally George Pachymeres, which are hostile to the union and were written or completed after its collapse; the study reports the character and severity of the persecution as attested and gives no figures, because none is reliable.

The continuation of the Arsenite schism and the substantial overlap between Arsenite and anti-unionist constituencies are standard.

The absence of any financial transfer to Rome under the union is a description of the terms, treated in Module 2.

The reduction of the Anatolian frontier forces and their privileges, the diversion of resources to western policy, and the consequent collapse of the Byzantine position in Asia Minor within a generation, are the received scholarly account and are reported as such; the foundation of the Ottoman emirate on that frontier in the following decades is standard. **No figures are given for revenue, troop numbers or territorial losses.**

The propositions that domestic legitimacy is a stock depleted by acts and unreplenished by success, and that a state facing threats of different tempo will allocate by tempo rather than magnitude, are this study's.

MODULE 6

THE HYPERPYRON DEBASED

Module 6 · extraction — a state whose revenue could not fund its diplomacy, and the frontier that was cashed in to pay for it

The base

The restored empire's fiscal position was the arithmetic behind everything in this study.

Byzantium before 1204 had been a wealthy state with a gold currency of legendary stability. The Fourth Crusade destroyed that. What Michael VIII recovered in 1261 was a territorially reduced empire, a ruined and depopulated capital, a commercial system in which the carrying trade and much of the customs revenue had passed to Italians, and a currency already degraded.

And he could not raise the base. The territories were what they were; the Italians held the commercial concessions and Michael had extended them further to Genoa in 1261 to buy the alliance against Venice; and the Anatolian provinces that had been the empire's manpower reserve were deteriorating.

What he spent on

Against a base that could not grow, the expenditures were extraordinary and every one of them was foreign policy.

The fleet, built from nothing. **The rebuilding and repopulation of Constantinople. The Balkan and Greek campaigns**, continuously, against Epirus, Thessaly, the Latin princes and the Bulgarians. **And the subsidies** — the payments, gifts, dowries and bribes that constituted the diplomacy examined in Module 1. Every marriage alliance had a portion. Every restrained enemy had a price. The Aragonese connection had costs.

The union itself was free. **The diplomacy the union was part of was ruinously expensive**, and it was funded by debasement of the gold coinage and by pressure on what could still be taxed.

Where the money came from

And the answer is the module's finding and it was set out in the cost column.

The eastern frontier was cashed in.

The Byzantine east had been held by a frontier society whose service was sustained by tax privileges and land grants — a settlement of the ordinary kind this collection has examined repeatedly: men who fight in exchange for exemptions rather than for pay. Under the Laskarid emperors of Nicaea, whose whole state had been an Anatolian one, that society had been maintained and the frontier had been secure.

Michael reduced it. The privileges were curtailed, the registers revised, the resources redirected to the western wars and the western diplomacy. **A settlement that had cost the treasury nothing in cash was converted into cash, and the thing it had been buying was allowed to lapse.**

Within two decades the frontier was gone.

The general form

That is a recognisable operation and this collection has met it before from the other side.

The Seljuk study found a settlement in which soldiers were paid by revenue assignment rather than by salary, and found that such a settlement survives only so long as the state maintains the registers and the audits. The Mughal study found the same instrument working, because the registers were kept and the horses were branded.

Here the instrument was working and the state deliberately cancelled it to realise the cash.

A settlement that pays a service class in exemptions rather than in coin is, from a treasury's point of view, a source of revenue that has not yet been collected — and a government under acute fiscal pressure will collect it, because the exemption is visible in the accounts as forgone income while the service it purchases is invisible until it stops.

The service is invisible because a frontier that is not being attacked looks like a frontier that does not need defending.

Who paid

The incidence is the usual one and can be stated briefly.

The frontier population paid first, by losing the privileges that had sustained them, and then paid comprehensively by being conquered.

The taxpayers of the remaining provinces paid through the debasement of the coinage, which is a tax on everyone holding money and falls hardest on those who cannot avoid it.

The Italian merchant communities paid nothing and profited, holding concessions Michael had granted to buy allies.

And the church paid nothing directly — no revenue crossed to Rome under the union — and paid everything in the currency the preceding module described.

Reading extraction against the framework

The finding, and it is a specific and dangerous operation that this collection should watch for.

Where a state has settled a service obligation by granting exemptions, the exemption appears in its accounts as revenue forgone and the service appears nowhere at all — so a treasury under pressure will convert the settlement into cash and will not see what it has spent until the service is needed.

That is a general form of the accounting error and it is unusually clean here because the two halves are so widely separated in time. The privileges were reduced in the 1260s and 1270s. The frontier collapsed in the 1290s and after. **No official in the 1270s could have been shown the connection, because there was nothing yet to show.**

And the second finding, on what an existential threat does to a budget. Every expenditure in Michael's account is defensible against Charles of Anjou, and the total is a state that spent its structural assets to survive a conjunctural threat.

A ruler who successfully meets an urgent threat by liquidating a slow one has not solved a problem; he has changed its schedule — and because the schedules are different, he will be praised for the first and dead before the second arrives, which is exactly what happened to Michael VIII and exactly why the case reads as a triumph in 1282 and as a catastrophe by 1300.

A note on sources.

The fiscal condition of the restored empire, the loss of commercial revenue to Italian communities, and the debasement of the hyperpyron under Michael VIII and his successors are standard; **no figures are given for the degree of debasement or for total revenue at any date**, because the surviving material supports ranges rather than series and the scholarly estimates vary.

The Treaty of Nymphaion of 1261 and its concessions to Genoa are treated in Module 1. The fleet, the rebuilding of Constantinople and the Balkan campaigns are

likewise treated there.

The reduction of the privileges and land tenures sustaining the Anatolian frontier society under Michael VIII, in contrast to Laskarid practice, and the subsequent collapse of the Byzantine position in Asia Minor, are the received scholarly account and are reported as such rather than argued here.

The comparison with revenue-assignment settlements draws on the Seljuk and Mughal studies in this sequence.

The proposition that an exemption-based settlement appears in a treasury's accounts as forgone revenue while the service it purchases appears nowhere, and is therefore liquidated under fiscal pressure, is this study's.

MODULE 7

WRITTEN AFTER IT FAILED

Module 7 · information and suppression — a policy whose entire surviving Greek record was composed by men who had watched it collapse, and an emperor who had to hide his own union from the people it bound

The archive

The evidential position in this case has a particular shape and it should be established before any of the narrative is relied on.

Almost everything we know from the Greek side about the union of 1274 was written after 1282, by opponents, under a regime that had repudiated it.

The principal narrative source is **George Pachymeres**, who lived through the whole of it, was a cleric of the Great Church, opposed the union, and wrote his history under Andronikos II — that is, under the emperor who had reversed his father's policy, deposed his father's patriarch and refused his father burial. He is a serious historian and he is not neutral, and no line of his about the union was written in a world where saying it was dangerous.

The Latin record is the opposite and equally partial: the conciliar acts, the papal registers, and the correspondence of a curia recording a submission it had wanted for two centuries.

So the two archives are a record of a triumph and a record of a betrayal, of the same six men in the same church on the same afternoon, and this study has had to work between them.

What Michael concealed

And the most revealing information fact of the case is a concealment.

Michael VIII did not publish the terms.

The negotiation was conducted by a small circle. The Greek clergy were told that the concessions were formal and that nothing in their worship would change. The specific undertakings — papal primacy, the right of appeal, the commemoration in the diptychs, the filioque — were minimised, deferred and, where possible, not

implemented. The pope's name was not immediately inserted in the diptychs; the creed was not immediately altered; the delegation's oath in France was not read out in Constantinople.

He tried to buy the receipt in Rome without delivering the goods in Constantinople, and for several years he partly succeeded, which is why the later popes' correspondence is full of demands for evidence that the union was actually in force.

That is a recognisable operation and this collection has named it. **The seam of information runs between two audiences, and the ruler's core task is keeping the two ends from meeting.** Here it ran between the curia and the congregation, and both ends knew there was something at the other.

Why the concealment failed

It failed for the reason concealments of this kind always fail, and the reason is structural rather than a matter of leaks.

The thing being concealed was a liturgical act.

Papal primacy is a proposition and can be conceded on paper indefinitely. The right of appeal is a procedure nobody was going to use. But **the commemoration of the pope in the diptychs is performed aloud, in the anaphora, in front of everyone, every time**, and the filioque is recited by the congregation.

A concession that must eventually be performed in public cannot be concealed; it can only be postponed — and the postponement is itself visible to the party who required the concession, which is why the popes kept asking.

Michael was therefore trapped between two audiences with incompatible requirements: Rome needed the union performed to keep the file live, and Constantinople would refuse it the moment it was. Every year of delay eroded his standing with the first, and every step toward compliance eroded it with the second.

Where a concession's whole value to one audience is that it be visible, and its whole cost to the other is that it be visible, there is no concealment strategy — only a schedule of which audience to lose first.

What was suppressed

The suppression was real and its target was domestic.

Anti-unionist clergy were removed. Monasteries were coerced. Prominent opponents — including members of the imperial family — were imprisoned, exiled and

in some cases mutilated. The Byzantine sources report blinding and the cutting out of tongues, and they report it at length, and they were written by the winning side of the argument, and the study says both things.

What is not in dispute is that **Michael VIII conducted a persecution of his own church over a doctrinal question, having come to the throne over a blinded child and having deposed three patriarchs.** The pattern of his reign is consistent and the sources hostile to him did not have to invent it.

And what was not

Against that, one thing was not suppressed and could not be: **the Synodikon.**

The annual recitation of the anathemas continued. Michael could remove a patriarch and could not cancel the Triumph of Orthodoxy, because that feast was the foundation of the church's own account of itself and suppressing it would have conceded the entire question.

A ruler can silence the men who would object and cannot silence a liturgy that objects on its own schedule — and a liturgy has no author to imprison, no office to abolish, and a constituency consisting of everyone who attends.

Reading the seam against the framework

The first finding, on records written after a reversal. Almost the whole Greek record of this policy was produced under the regime that had cancelled it, by men who had opposed it, at a moment when opposition had become the official position.

A policy's surviving record, where it was reversed by a successor, is written by the party that won the reversal — and will therefore describe the policy as having been both wicked and futile, which are the two things the winners need it to have been. It is not enough that it failed; it must be shown to have deserved to.

The corrective is not to disbelieve Pachymeres, who is careful and well informed. It is to notice that the *questions* he asks were set by the outcome, and that the union's own case — which was that it stopped an invasion and saved the city — appears in his account as a motive rather than as an achievement.

The second finding, on concealment. The seam in this case ran between a curia and a congregation, and it failed because the article being traded had to be performed aloud.

A concession that is executed by a document can be concealed; a concession that is executed by a rite cannot — because a rite has an audience by definition and postponing it is itself a communication to the party who demanded it.

That is a distinct and useful category. Most of what this collection has examined moves on paper: grants, investitures, diplomas, attestations. **The union of Lyon was payable in liturgy**, which is the one currency that cannot be transferred privately, and the whole of Michael's difficulty follows from that single property of the goods.

A note on sources.

George Pachymeres as the principal Greek narrative source for the period, his position as a cleric of the Great Church, his opposition to the union and his composition under Andronikos II, are standard, and his partiality is stated here rather than discounted.

The Latin record — the conciliar acts of the Second Council of Lyon and the papal registers — is standard.

Michael VIII's minimisation and postponement of the union's practical terms, the delay in inserting the pope's name in the diptychs, and the repeated papal demands for evidence of implementation, follow the standard accounts of the period between 1274 and 1281.

The persecution of anti-unionists, including imprisonment, exile, mutilation and blinding, is reported in the Byzantine sources and is treated in Module 5, with the same cautions as to figures and as to the sources' interest.

The continuation of the Synodikon's annual recitation is a description of settled liturgical practice and is treated in Module 4.

The propositions that a policy's record where reversed is written to show it both wicked and futile, and that a concession payable in liturgy cannot be concealed but only postponed, are this study's.

MODULE 8

THE POPE WHO WAS THE ATTACKER'S OVERLORD

Module 8 · elite coordination and the default — an authorisation bought from an interested party, honoured by one administration and cancelled by the next, without the buyer having broken a single term

The transaction, restated

Michael VIII paid a doctrinal submission for a papal decision. The decision was that Charles of Anjou's expedition against Constantinople would not be a crusade.

And the party making that decision was Charles of Anjou's feudal overlord.

The kingdom of Sicily was a papal fief. Charles held it from the pope, had been given it by the pope, and had won it in a papal war against the Hohenstaufen. His whole position in Italy was a papal creation and his usefulness to the papacy — as the enforcer of its Italian policy against the imperial party — was the reason it had been created.

So the issuer of Michael's warrant was **the principal beneficiary of the army the warrant was meant to restrain**, and had built that army for its own purposes.

That is not a source of title. That is a party, and this sequence has established exactly what follows.

The prediction, and it was already on the record

The Investiture study in this sequence found that **a source of title which acquires the means of enforcement converts itself into a claimant and forfeits the immunity that made it worth going to** — and offered it as a prediction to be
tested against later cases.

Test it here.

In 1054 the papacy had no army and had gone east to ask for one. By 1274 it had one, in the person of a French king who held his kingdom from it and did what it wanted in Italy. In the intervening two centuries it had acquired the papal states, a fiscal

machine, a legal system and a foreign policy.

And its authorisations had become policies accordingly. Gregory X granted Michael's request because he wanted a crusade and a union. Martin IV cancelled it because he wanted what Charles of Anjou wanted. Nothing in Michael's conduct determined either outcome, and nothing about the Greek church's condition changed between the two decisions.

An authorisation from an issuer with interests is a policy of that issuer, and policies are revised at each change of administration.

The administrations

Follow the succession and the case makes itself.

Gregory X, 1271–76. Wanted union and crusade; restrained Charles; received the submission at Lyon in 1274; kept the bargain. He died on 10 January 1276.

Then four popes in six years — Innocent V, Adrian V, John XXI, Nicholas III — of whom Nicholas III (1277–80) was a Roman Orsini who actively worked to limit Charles of Anjou's power in Italy and continued to hold him back. Through all of it the union held and the expedition did not sail, and the popes pressed Michael for evidence that the union was actually in force.

Then the conclave of 1280–81 at Viterbo, in which Charles of Anjou's influence was decisive, and the election in February 1281 of Simon de Brion — a Frenchman, a former servant of the French crown, Charles's man — as Martin IV.

In November 1281 Martin IV excommunicated Michael VIII as a schismatic and a fosterer of schismatics, declared the union void, and blessed Charles's enterprise.

Michael had not repudiated anything. He was still, formally, in union with Rome, still persecuting anti-unionists at home, still nominally commemorating the pope. **The union was cancelled by its own issuer, in favour of the issuer's vassal, for reasons entirely internal to Italian politics.**

What that does to the instrument

Set that outcome beside the sequence's other cases and the discriminating variable is visible.

The Seljuks bought a caliph's investiture. The caliph had no army, no revenue and a stipend a general could cut. He could not have been made to issue it and he could not withdraw it under pressure from a rival, because he had nothing a rival could

threaten. The investiture held for a century and a half.

Charles VII obtained a warrant from a peasant girl with no property, office, faction or prospect of rule. She could gain nothing either way, and the anointing at Reims could not be cancelled by anybody, ever, and was not.

Michael VIII obtained a warrant from a sovereign with an army, a treasury, a foreign policy and a vassal invading his country. It lasted seven years.

The durability of an authorisation is a function of the issuer's inability to benefit from revoking it. Everything else — the solemnity of the ceremony, the number of bishops present, the price paid, the sincerity of the parties — is secondary to that single property, and this case is its clearest demonstration, because Michael did everything correctly by every other measure and lost the instrument anyway.

The default

Which leaves the question of what the arrangement fell back to when nobody was enforcing.

It fell back to nothing, instantly.

Michael died on 11 December 1282. Within weeks his son Andronikos II had repudiated the union. Bekkos was deposed and eventually imprisoned. The unionist clergy were removed. A synod at Blachernae in 1285 condemned the union and its theology formally.

And Michael VIII was refused the rites of Orthodox burial. The emperor who recovered Constantinople was interred without a funeral service, in unconsecrated ground, by his own son.

The default of an imposed doctrinal settlement is its immediate and total reversal on the death of the man imposing it, because nothing had been transferred to any institution: the appointments were his, the persecutions were his, the signature was his, and none of it had become anybody else's interest to defend.

Reading the default against the framework

The finding, and it is the sequence's cleanest confirmation of a prediction made two studies earlier.

A source of title that has acquired a floor has become a party, and its authorisations are policies. The Investiture study offered this as a prediction from the mechanism; the caliphal recovery of the 1120s and 1130s tested it on the Islamic side; this case tests it on the Latin side and it holds without qualification.

The papacy of 1274 was still the same office that had crowned Charlemagne and humbled Henry IV, and its determinations still carried immense weight. **But it had, in the intervening centuries, acquired precisely the property that a source of title cannot have and remain one: a stake in the outcomes it was certifying.** Michael went to it in good faith on the old understanding and received the new product.

And the corollary, which is the practical test. Before purchasing an authorisation, ask what the issuer gains by revoking it.

If the answer is nothing — because he has no army, no territory, no vassal in the field, and nothing a third party can offer him — the instrument is durable and worth its price. **If the answer is anything at all, what is being purchased is a policy with a term, and the term ends at the next election.**

A note on sources.

The status of the kingdom of Sicily as a papal fief and Charles of Anjou's tenure of it are standard, as is the papal creation of the Angevin position in Italy against the Hohenstaufen.

Gregory X's pontificate to 10 January 1276; the succession of Innocent V, Adrian V and John XXI in 1276; the pontificate of Nicholas III from 1277 to 1280 and his policy of restraining Angevin power in Italy; the conclave at Viterbo of 1280–81 and Charles of Anjou's influence upon it; and the election of Simon de Brion as Martin IV in February 1281, are standard. Martin IV's excommunication of Michael VIII in November 1281 and his support for the Angevin enterprise are standard.

That Michael had not repudiated the union at the time of his excommunication, and that the popes between 1274 and 1281 pressed him for evidence of its implementation, follows the standard accounts and is treated in Module 7.

Michael VIII's death on 11 December 1282, Andronikos II's repudiation of the union, the deposition and later imprisonment of Bekkos, the synod at Blachernae in 1285, and the denial of Orthodox burial rites to Michael, are standard and are treated further in Module 10.

The comparisons with the Seljuk and Joan cases draw on the studies of those in this sequence, where the material is documented.

The proposition that an authorisation's durability is a function of the issuer's inability to benefit from revoking it, and the practical test derived from it, are this study's, and confirm a prediction offered in the Investiture Contest study.

MODULE 9

HIS OWN SISTER

Module 9 · plurality or foreclosure — an opposition the emperor could not reach because it was inside his family, inside his church and inside every congregation, and a refusal that cost nothing to perform

Where the opposition was

Michael VIII could remove any officeholder in his empire. The opposition to the union was not composed of officeholders.

His sister. Eulogia Palaiologina, who had raised him, was the centre of the anti-unionist party in Constantinople; her daughters married into the Bulgarian royal house and carried the opposition abroad. Michael proceeded against his own family and it did not stop them.

The monasteries. Athos, the houses of the capital, and monastic communities across the empire refused. They held land, they held prestige, their members had renounced advancement, and — the property the Joan study identified and the East–West study named as an institution — **they were unbuyable by profession.** A ruler cannot bribe a man who has taken a vow of poverty and cannot threaten with disgrace a man whose whole standing rests on having refused the things that confer it.

The Arsenites, still in schism from 1261, who now had a second and much more popular grievance and could recruit on both.

And the congregations, whose refusal took the simplest possible form.

The free refusal

The instrument available to an ordinary Byzantine Christian in 1275 was the one this collection has met before and it is the cheapest counterweight in the entire sequence.

He could decline to receive communion from a unionist priest.

That costs nothing. It requires no organisation, no property, no literacy and no arms. It cannot be prosecuted, because it consists in an omission. It cannot be detected reliably, because a congregation that stays away is indistinguishable from a

congregation that is elsewhere. And it strikes at the only thing the union actually required, which was performance.

The union needed to be received, and reception is an act by the receiving party. No amount of imperial coercion can make a man take communion, and the more coercion is applied the more the refusal becomes a demonstration.

The Investiture study found the Latin reform handing the laity a competence — to judge an unworthy priest's mass — that it could not afterwards withdraw. The Byzantine laity did not need to be handed it. **The Synodikon had been teaching it every Lent for four centuries.**

What the emperor could and could not do

Set out the ledger of Michael's actual power against the opposition and the shape is stark.

He could and did: depose the patriarch; appoint another; remove bishops; imprison, exile, mutilate and blind opponents including his own relatives; confiscate monastic property; and place unionists in every office he controlled.

He could not: change what was recited on the first Sunday of Lent; make a congregation take communion; make a monk want anything; or make his own sister stop.

And crucially he could not make the union stick for a single day after his death, which is the measure of the whole thing.

A ruler's coercive reach ends at the boundary of what can be compelled by threatening a person with loss — and against a class of people who have already renounced what he can take, and a population whose required act is a voluntary participation, he has no instrument at all.

The other counterweight: the pope

And there is a second counterweight in this case which is unusual and belongs in this module because it was, from Michael's side, exactly that.

Michael could not compel the pope either.

He had no leverage over a papal election, no army in Italy, and nothing the curia needed except the submission he had already made. When the conclave of 1280–81 delivered Charles of Anjou's candidate, Michael had no instrument whatever — and had spent everything he had on a warrant the new administration cancelled.

A ruler who has bought an external authorisation has acquired a counterweight rather than an ally, because the issuer's independence, which is what made the purchase worth making, is also what makes the issuer uncontrollable afterwards.

That is the uncomfortable form of the sequence's central proposition and this case is where it becomes visible. **The very property that makes an authoriser worth going to — that he could have refused — is the property that means he can refuse later.**

What a subject could do, graded

A monk could refuse, publicly, at no cost he had not already accepted, and be believed because of it. Strongest position available.

A bishop could refuse and be deposed, and the deposed became the opposition's leadership.

A member of the imperial family could refuse and be proceeded against, and generally survived because the emperor could not afford to destroy his own house.

A congregation could stay away, and did, and that was sufficient.

A peasant could do the same thing as the congregation, for the same reason, at the same cost, which was nothing. **This is one of the very few cases in this collection where the instrument available to the poorest subject was the same instrument that actually decided the outcome.**

Reading liberty against the framework

The first finding, and it sharpens a proposition the sequence has been building.

Where what a ruler requires is a voluntary act by his subjects, the subjects hold a veto that costs nothing to exercise and cannot be defeated by any amount of coercion applied to persons. Coercion works by threatening loss; a person whose required act is participation loses nothing by not participating.

That is why religious impositions fail so reliably in this collection while fiscal and military ones succeed. A tax can be collected from an unwilling man; a battle can be fought by conscripts; **a sacrament cannot be received by somebody who stays at home**, and the whole apparatus of the state is irrelevant to the question.

The second finding, on monasticism as an institution. The East–West study identified monasticism as a standing institutional supply of unbuyable witnesses. This case shows the supply in operation against an emperor at the height of his power, and adds the reason it cannot be attacked.

An institution of voluntary poverty is coercion-proof in both directions: its members cannot be bought because they have renounced the goods, and cannot be threatened because they have renounced the goods. Michael could confiscate monastic property and did, and the confiscation removed the institution's wealth without touching its authority, because its authority had never rested on the wealth. That is the one form of institutional counterweight that a ruler's ordinary instruments do not engage at any point.

And the third, which is the module's hardest. Michael's purchase of an external authorisation created, for him, a counterweight he could not control — and this is a general property of the transaction rather than bad luck.

An authorisation is worth having because its issuer is beyond the buyer's power; therefore every authorisation a ruler buys is also a standing power over him that he has himself created. The Seljuks understood this and spent a century and a half keeping their caliph harmless. Michael went to an issuer who was already the most powerful sovereign in Latin Christendom, and discovered in 1281 what he had bought.

A note on sources.

Eulogia Palaiologina's leadership of the anti-unionist opposition, her family connections including the Bulgarian marriage, and Michael's proceedings against members of his own family, are standard.

The monastic opposition, including on Athos and in the houses of the capital, and the persecution of anti-unionists, are treated in Module 5 with their sources and the same cautions. The continuation of the Arsenite schism and its overlap with the anti-unionist constituency are treated in the Landscape and Module 5.

The identification of monasticism as an institutional supply of unbuyable witnesses draws on the East–West Schism study in this sequence; the argument that voluntary poverty makes an institution coercion-proof in both directions is this study's.

The conclave of 1280–81 and Michael's lack of leverage over it are treated in Module 8.

The propositions that a required voluntary act confers a costless veto, and that every purchased authorisation is a standing power over the purchaser that he has created himself, are this study's.

MODULE 10

THE VESPERS

Module 10 · change and collapse — an emperor who defeated the greatest soldier in Europe by an insurrection he had helped arrange, died three months later, and was refused a funeral

1281

By the end of 1281 Michael's position was, on paper, catastrophic.

Martin IV had excommunicated him in November, declared the union void, and blessed Charles of Anjou's enterprise. **Charles had concluded a treaty at Orvieto in July 1281** with Venice and the titular Latin emperor Philip of Courtenay for the restoration of the Latin empire, with the expedition to sail in 1283. **And at home** he had spent seven years persecuting his own church for a document that no longer existed.

He had bought a policy and the administration had changed. Everything in Module 8 is the description of that position.

What he did about it

And what he did is one of the most remarkable acts of statecraft in the medieval record, and it was not ecclesiastical.

Peter III of Aragon had a claim to Sicily through his wife Constance, daughter of Manfred, whom Charles had killed at Benevento. He had a fleet, a grievance and the ambition. Michael had been in contact with him and with the Sicilian exiles for years, and — on the accounts, including his own — had been supplying money.

On 30 March 1282, at Palermo, at vespers, the Sicilians rose. The French in Sicily were massacred over the following weeks. Charles's fleet, assembled at Messina for the invasion of Constantinople, was burned or lost. Peter III landed in August and took the island. Charles of Anjou spent the remaining three years of his life fighting for Sicily and never sailed east.

The expedition against Constantinople, which two popes and a doctrinal submission had failed to stop, was destroyed by an insurrection in a Sicilian town.

Michael claimed the credit for it in his own autobiographical account, and the claim is broadly accepted: Byzantine gold was one of the streams funding the Aragonese and Sicilian preparation, though it was not the only one and the rising had its own local causes in Angevin misgovernment.

11 December 1282

He died nine months later, on campaign in Thrace.

Andronikos II repudiated the union at once. Bekkos was deposed, and was eventually imprisoned and died in confinement. The unionist clergy were removed. A synod at Blachernae in 1285 condemned the union and Bekkos's theology formally.

And Michael VIII was refused the rites of Orthodox burial. He was interred without a funeral service. The emperor who had recovered Constantinople from the Latins, held it against the greatest army in Europe, and destroyed that army by a stratagem executed a thousand miles away, was buried by his son without a priest saying the words.

The four ways this could have ended

Set out the possibilities and note that Michael's actual course was the only one available and still failed.

Defeat Charles in the field. Not possible; Module 1 established the disparity.

Buy off the pope. Attempted, achieved, and cancelled in 1281 by a change of administration Michael could not influence.

Obtain genuine union. Not possible; Module 4 established that the population had been formed for four centuries to refuse it, and Module 9 established that its refusal cost nothing.

Destroy Charles by other means. Achieved, in 1282, and it worked completely — and it worked because it was a purely political instrument requiring nothing of the Byzantine church.

Every ecclesiastical instrument Michael used failed and the one secular instrument succeeded, and the ecclesiastical failures cost him his church, his family's peace, his reputation and his funeral, while the secular success cost him money.

What survived

Sort what he left.

The city survived, and remained Byzantine for a further hundred and seventy years. That is his achievement and it is not small.

The dynasty survived, and ruled until 1453.

The union did not survive him by a month, because nothing had been transferred to any institution.

The Anatolian frontier did not survive at all, and the empire that kept its capital lost its body.

And the anathemas continued to be read every Lent, unchanged by anything he had done, and Bekkos's name was eventually added to them.

Reading the collapse against the framework

The first finding, on which instruments worked. Michael VIII deployed two kinds of instrument against the same threat over eight years. The ecclesiastical instrument obtained a genuine and valuable result — seven years of restraint — and was revoked by its issuer. The political instrument destroyed the threat permanently.

Where a threat depends on a third party's decision, an authorisation buys delay and a stratagem buys resolution — because the authorisation leaves the threat intact and merely reclassifies it, while the stratagem removes the capacity.

Michael's tragedy is that he needed the first to survive long enough to arrange the second, and that the first cost him everything the second could not restore.

The second finding, and it is the study's central one.

A ruler who spends domestic legitimacy to buy an external authorisation makes an irreversible payment for a revocable asset, and the asymmetry is total.

The submission of 1274 could not be un-made in Constantinople; it was known, it was performed, it was persecuted for. The warrant of 1274 was un-made in Rome by a single election. **What he gave was permanent and what he received had a term**, and neither party set out to defraud anybody — that is simply the shape of the two goods.

Any ruler contemplating that trade should price the payment as permanent and the receipt as terminating at the issuer's next succession, which is the practical form of everything this study has found.

And the third, on the funeral. The final entry is small and it is the exact measure of the whole.

Michael VIII got the city, the dynasty, the victory over Charles of Anjou, and a hundred and seventy more years for the empire. He did not get a burial service, and his own son withheld it.

The instrument he could not buy at any price was the one his own church controlled, and it was the only one his subjects could see him being denied.

A note on sources.

Martin IV's excommunication of Michael in November 1281 and his support for the Angevin enterprise are treated in Module 8. The Treaty of Orvieto of July 1281 between Charles of Anjou, Venice and Philip of Courtenay for the restoration of the Latin empire, with the expedition projected for 1283, is standard.

Peter III of Aragon's claim to Sicily through Constance, daughter of Manfred; Michael VIII's contacts with the Aragonese court and with Sicilian exiles and his financial support for them; the rising at Palermo on 30 March 1282 and the massacre of the French; the destruction of Charles's fleet assembled at Messina; and Peter III's landing in August 1282, are standard. Michael's own claim of credit appears in his autobiographical account and is broadly accepted in the scholarship, with the qualification that the rising had substantial local causes in Angevin misgovernment and that Byzantine subsidy was one factor among several; **no text of Michael's account is quoted here**, none having been verified against an original for this study.

Michael's death on 11 December 1282; Andronikos II's repudiation of the union; the deposition, later imprisonment and death of Bekkos; the synod at Blachernae in 1285; and the denial of Orthodox burial rites, are standard.

The survival of Constantinople to 1453 and of the Palaiologan dynasty is standard. The loss of Anatolia is treated in Modules 5 and 6. The later addition of Bekkos's name to the anathemas of the Synodikon is standard.

The propositions that an authorisation buys delay while a stratagem buys resolution, and that a ruler trading domestic legitimacy for an external warrant makes a permanent payment for a terminating asset, are this study's.

MODULE 11

THE EMPEROR WITHOUT A FUNERAL

Module 11 · the grim accounting — a policy that succeeded in everything it was designed to do and cost more than it saved

The first column

Set down what Michael VIII achieved, at the fullest valuation.

Constantinople recovered and held. He did not plan the recovery of 1261 and he consolidated it, rebuilt the city, repopulated it, and defended it for twenty-one years against every power in the Mediterranean.

Charles of Anjou defeated. The most formidable prince in Latin Christendom spent fifteen years preparing to take Constantinople and never sailed, and the fleet assembled for the purpose burned at Messina. Michael arranged a substantial part of that.

A hundred and seventy more years for the Byzantine empire, and a dynasty that lasted to 1453.

And a diplomatic performance of genuine brilliance: the Genoese alliance, the Mongol and Balkan marriages, the Aragonese connection, the papal negotiation — a state with a fraction of its enemies' resources kept alive by manoeuvre for two decades.

The second column

John IV Laskaris, blinded at eleven, imprisoned for the rest of his life, and visited by Michael's son thirty years later to ask forgiveness.

The Arsenite schism, which divided the Byzantine church from 1265 to about 1310.

The persecution of the anti-unionists — bishops deposed, monks exiled and confiscated, opponents imprisoned, mutilated and blinded, including members of his own family — conducted for seven years to enforce a union that was cancelled by the party that had required it.

The Anatolian frontier, whose sustaining privileges were reduced to fund the western policy, and which was gone within two decades of his death, taking with it the

empire's manpower, its agricultural base and eventually its existence.

And the commercial concessions to Genoa, made in 1261 to buy an ally, which transferred the carrying trade and much of the customs revenue of the eastern Mediterranean out of Byzantine hands permanently.

Why the second column is larger

The accounting in this case is unusually decidable, which is rare in this collection, and the reason is that the two columns can be compared on a single dimension: **what threatened the empire's existence.**

Michael identified the Angevin invasion as that threat, was correct that it was one, and defeated it.

And the empire was destroyed by the other threat, in the direction he had defunded to pay for the first. The Ottoman emirate was founded on the Bithynian frontier in the decades after his death, in exactly the districts whose frontier society he had dismantled.

He won the war he could see and lost the empire in the war he could not, and both are consequences of the same allocation.

That is not hindsight cheaply applied. It is the case's structure: a ruler with insufficient resources facing two threats of different tempo, who spent the slow one to buy the fast one, and was correct about the tempo and wrong about the magnitude.

The shape of the record

The Greek record was written by his enemies after his policy was reversed; the Latin record by a curia recording a submission it had wanted for centuries. Module 7 sets out what follows.

What neither contains is the ordinary Byzantine. **The union of 1274 was decided against by the population and the population appears in both archives only as an obstacle** — as the resistance the emperor had to overcome, or as the schismatics the pope had to have delivered.

The party that actually determined the outcome is the one neither side bothered to record, which is the sharpest instance of a bias this collection has found in every case.

They do not net

And the columns are the same transaction.

The diplomacy that saved the city was funded by the frontier that lost the empire. The union that bought seven years was paid for with the legitimacy that made his own funeral impossible. The Genoese alliance that broke Venice's grip transferred the trade to Genoa instead.

Every success in the first column was purchased with an item in the second, and in each case the purchase was rational at the moment it was made.

Reading the accounting against the framework

The finding. This collection generally refuses to net the columns, on the ground that costs and benefits fall on different people and are not commensurable. This case is the exception that clarifies the rule.

Where a ruler's costs and benefits fall on the same entity — here, the empire itself — the accounting is decidable, and the answer depends entirely on the time horizon chosen. At 1282 Michael VIII is a triumph. At 1300 he is a disaster. At 1453 he is the man who bought a hundred and seventy years.

A verdict on a ruler is a statement about the horizon at which the accounts are closed, and choosing that horizon is the whole of the judgement — which is why the same reign is the salvation of the empire in one history and the beginning of its end in the next, with both authors using the same facts.

And the second finding. The one thing Michael was denied is the one thing that cost nothing to give.

A funeral service is free. It requires a priest, a book and twenty minutes. **It was withheld because it was the only sanction his church still held over an emperor who had taken everything else it had** — and its withholding was the most effective single act of the entire opposition, because it was performed on the one occasion when the emperor could not respond.

The cheapest sanction available to a subordinate institution is the one it applies after the ruler is dead, and it is uniquely effective because it is uniquely uncontestable.

A note on sources.

The recovery and consolidation of Constantinople, the defeat of the Angevin enterprise, and the survival of the empire to 1453 and the dynasty with it, are treated in earlier modules with their sources.

The blinding of John IV Laskaris, his imprisonment, and Andronikos II's visit to him in 1290 to seek forgiveness, are standard. The Arsenite schism and the persecution

of anti-unionists are treated in the Landscape and Module 5. The Anatolian frontier and the Genoese concessions are treated in Modules 1, 5 and 6.

The foundation of the Ottoman emirate on the Bithynian frontier in the decades after 1282 is standard; the connection to the reduction of the frontier society under Michael VIII is the received scholarly account and is reported as such.

No figures are given anywhere in this study for populations, revenues, army sizes, casualties or territorial extents, because the surviving material does not support them.

The denial of Orthodox burial rites to Michael VIII is treated in Module 10.

The propositions that a verdict on a ruler is a statement about the horizon at which accounts are closed, and that the cheapest and most effective sanction available to a subordinate institution is the one applied after the ruler's death, are this study's.

MODULE 12

THE MAID AND THE POPE

Module 12 · convergence and divergence — two rulers with defective titles who went outside their own orders for a warrant, and the single property that decided which one worked

The two cases

This sequence contains two rulers in the same structural position, two centuries apart, at opposite ends of Europe, and the comparison decides the case.

Charles VII of France, 1429. Disinherited by a treaty his own father had sealed; a question over his birth; no coronation; the great theological faculty of his kingdom in his enemy's obedience; Reims and the Holy Ampulla in enemy hands. He could not manufacture an authorisation and could not obtain one from any institution.

Michael VIII Palaiologos, 1274. A usurper who had blinded the legitimate emperor at eleven; excommunicated for it by his own patriarch; absolved only by the third patriarch he had installed; and facing an invasion he could not defeat, whose legality depended on a decision by a foreign authority.

Both needed a warrant from outside their own order. Both got one. One held for five centuries and the other for seven years.

What decided it

Set the two issuers side by side and the discriminating property is the only difference that matters.

Joan of Arc had nothing. No property, no office, no faction, no lineage claim, no literacy, no prospect of rule, and — under the rule the whole dispute turned on — no capacity to hold the crown herself. Every one of those is a reason she could not have been bought, and she made the point herself at Rouen, correcting a copyist who had written *surrender to the Maid* where she had dictated *surrender to the King*.

She could gain nothing by issuing and nothing by withholding. The anointing at Reims on 17 July 1429 could therefore never be cancelled — not by her, not by

anyone — and it was not. The English attacked the author instead, burned her, and the coronation stood.

The pope in 1274 had everything. An army in the person of a vassal king; the papal states; a fiscal machine; a foreign policy centred on a crusade; and a direct interest in the outcome of the very question Michael brought him, since the man threatening Constantinople held his kingdom as a papal fief.

He could gain a great deal by issuing and a great deal by withholding, and both were true at different moments. Gregory X gained a union and a crusade by issuing. Martin IV gained his patron's enterprise by withdrawing.

The durability of an authorisation is a function of the issuer's inability to benefit from revoking it, and nothing else in the transaction can compensate for a defect in that property.

Michael did everything else better than Charles. His negotiation was more sophisticated, his terms more carefully drawn, his ceremony more solemn, his documents more numerous, his diplomacy incomparably more skilful. **He bought from an interested party and it was worth seven years.**

The eighth entry

Which supplies the catalogue's next term, and it is a new failure mode.

The sequence's list now runs: **capture, compulsion, purchase, starvation, hollowing, expenditure, forking, divorce** — and this case adds **revocation.**

Its distinctive property is that it requires no fault in the buyer. Michael had not broken a term, had not repudiated, had not ceased persecuting his own church on Rome's behalf. **The instrument was withdrawn because the issuer's interests changed, and the issuer had interests because he had acquired a floor.**

That is the Investiture study's prediction — that a source of title which acquires the means of enforcement becomes a claimant — arriving as a demonstration rather than a forecast. **In 1054 the papacy had no army and went east to ask for one. In 1274 it had one, and its authorisations had become the policies of the party that owned it.**

And the population

The second thread of the case is the one this study was set to trace and it terminates cleanly.

The union failed at home because the formation was not the emperor's to renegotiate, and the Byzantine formation had a feature no other case in this collection

possesses: an annually recited, publicly delivered, continuously updated list of anathemas, read on the anniversary of a lay and monastic victory over emperors who had tried to change doctrine.

A negative catechism is a barrier that a positive one is not. A population taught what to believe can be taught more. A population taught, every spring, what is condemned and who condemned it has been handed a test it can run itself, and the emperor's new doctrine fails the test in front of everyone.

And the refusal cost nothing. **Where the required act is participation, the veto is free**, and no coercion applied to persons can defeat an omission.

The strongest case for Michael VIII

Stated as his best advocate would state it.

You have written a study about a man who sold his church and was refused a funeral. Consider the alternative.

In 1274 Charles of Anjou held Sicily, southern Italy and the best army in Europe; he had bought the Latin claim to Constantinople under papal seal; and he was assembling a fleet. Byzantium could not have stopped him in the field and everybody knew it, including the monks who were denouncing the emperor for trying to stop him by other means.

The alternative to the union was not a pure Orthodox empire. It was a second 1204 — the city taken again, a Latin emperor again, a Latin patriarch in Hagia Sophia again, and this time with no Nicaea to retreat to, because Michael had brought the government back to the capital.

He bought seven years with a document. In those seven years he built a fleet, secured his Balkan frontiers, cultivated Aragon, and arranged the destruction of the Angevin enterprise at Palermo. The city stood for another hundred and seventy years and the Orthodox church, which anathematised him, survived because of it.

Judge the man who saved the church by what would have happened to it had he not.

The answer

The central claim is strong and this study concedes it. **The Angevin threat was real, Michael could not have met it militarily, and the union bought the years in which he arranged its destruction.** Nothing in the record makes him a fool or a mere apostate; he was a formidable ruler doing the only thing available.

But he bought from the wrong counterparty, and the flaw was visible in 1274 to anyone who applied the test. The pope was the invader's overlord. That is not hindsight; it is the structure of the transaction, and it produced exactly the result the structure predicts.

And what actually saved the city was not the union. It was Aragon, Sicilian misgovernment and Byzantine gold — a purely political operation requiring nothing of his church. He was working on both tracks simultaneously, and only one of them delivered. The ecclesiastical track bought delay and cost him his standing; the political track bought resolution and cost him money.

The permanent payment for a terminating asset is the case's shape and it was not necessary. Had he pursued the Aragonese connection without the union, he would have had less time and an intact church. Whether that trade was better is not decidable and the study does not pretend it is.

And the deepest cost is not in the ecclesiastical column at all. He defunded the Anatolian frontier to pay for a western policy, and the empire he saved from the Latins was taken by the Turks in the direction he had stopped watching. **The union is the famous mistake and the frontier is the fatal one**, and the second gets a fraction of the attention because it produced no dramatic scene and no anathema.

Now the concession, and it should be the last thing said.

Michael VIII understood his position better than almost any ruler in this collection. He knew he could not fight; he knew the threat's legality was decided in Italy; he knew what the decider wanted; he knew what he alone could supply; and he paid it. That is a complete and correct analysis, executed with great skill, and it failed for one reason.

The party he bought from was a party. And by 1274 there was no longer any authority in Latin Christendom that was not — because the office that had once been useful precisely for having nothing had spent two centuries acquiring everything.

The instrument Michael VIII needed had existed. It had ceased to exist about a hundred and fifty years before he needed it, and nobody had told him, because the change had happened gradually and the office still had the same name.

A note on sources.

The comparisons in this module rest on the studies of Charles VII, the Investiture Contest, the Seljuks and the East–West Schism in this sequence, where the material is documented.

Joan's correction of the letter at Rouen, and the anointing at Reims on 17 July 1429, are documented in the study of that case.

The papal position in 1274 — the tenure of Sicily as a papal fief, the succession of pontificates from Gregory X to Martin IV, and the excommunication of November 1281 — is treated in Module 8 with its sources.

The Synodikon and the Byzantine formation are treated in Module 4; the costless character of the popular refusal in Module 9; the Anatolian frontier in Modules 5 and 6.

The counter-position is composed, not quoted. It is an attempt to state the case for Michael VIII as his best advocate would state it, drawing on claims that appear across the historiography rather than on any single author, and it is answered point by point rather than dismissed.

This study takes no position on the theological questions at issue between the two churches, or on whether the union of 1274 was doctrinally acceptable. Its analysis is structural.

The identification of **revocation** as a distinct failure mode, and the proposition that an authorisation's durability depends on the issuer's inability to benefit from withdrawing it, are this study's, and confirm a prediction offered in the Investiture Contest study.

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Part of the collection Patterns of Power. Tested, never revealed.